

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /061 W

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P R 080207Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

/AMEMBASSY MANILA 5760

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

SECSTATE WASHDC 8412

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 KUALA LUMPUR 5167

USIAC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: ASEAN--SUMMARY OF MALAYSIAN PRESS REACTIONS

1. PRAISING PRESIDENT MARCOS FOR HIS DECISION TO ELIMINATE THE SABAH CLAIM, STAR SAYS:

2. "A MAGNANIMOUS GESTURE. YES, THERE IS NO BETTER WAY TO DESCRIBE THE FILIPINO DECISION NOT TO PURSUE ITS CLAIM TO SABAH ANY FURTHER. PRESIDENT MARCOS' DECISION BRINGS TO AN END 14 YEARS OF INDECISION AND ACRIMONY. COMMON SENSE AND GOODWILL HAS TRIUMPHED, AND THIS IS A VICTORY FOR THE PEOPLE OF MALAYSIA AS WELL AS THE PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES.

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3. "THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT NOW THAT REGARDLESS OF WHAT OTHER DECISIONS THAT WILL BE TAKEN AT THIS ASEAN SUMMIT, TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDENT MARCOS WILL STAND OUT AS REVEALING IN TRUE FASHION THE SPIRIT BEHIND ASEAN SOLIDARITY AND THE DETERMINATION OF THE FIVE COUNTRIES TO WORK TOGETHER PEACEFULLY FOR A COMMON OBJECTIVE.

4. "WEJOURNEY OVER THOUSAND MILES MUST BEGIN WITH THE FIRST STEP. PRESIDENT MARCOS HAS TAKEN THAT FIRST STEP. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE REST OF THE JOURNEY WILL BE MUCH EASIER. THE ATMOSPHERE AT THE MEETINGS SO FAR HAS BEEN ONE OF THE EXTREME CORDIALITY AMONG THE LEADERS. IT WILL SURELY BE A MEMORABLE SUMMIT."

5. SEEKING FURTHER CLARIFICATION ON THE SABAH ISSUE FROM PRESIDENT MARCOS, ENGLISH-MALAY TABLOID DAILY WATAN SAYS:

6. "THE SECOND ASEAN SUMMIT, CONCURRENTLY ITS TENTH ANNIVERSARY, WHICH BEGAN IN KUALA LUMPUR YESTERDAY SPARKLED WITH THE ASEAN SUMMIT....

7. "PRESIDENT MARCOS OF THE PHILIPPINES, HOWEVER, CAN BE SAID TO HAVE STOLEN THE LIMELIGHT BY HIS ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE PHILIPPINES WAS TAKING STEPS 'TO ELIMINATE' ITS CLAIM TO SABAH....

8. "PRESIDENT MARCOS' TENTH ANNIVERSARY PRESENT TO ASEAN IS NOT OLY A SHOW OF AMITY BUT A SACRIFICE WHICH A COUNTRY WOULD FIND HARD TO MAKE....

9. "THE PACKAGE, HOWEVER, IS GIFT-WRAPPED IN WORDS WHICH, WE FEEL, NEED FURTHER CLARIFICATION FROM PRESIDENT MARCOS.

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10. "WILL THE PHILIPPINES OUTRIGHTLY ABANDON ITS CLAIM OR WOULD THERE BE A BILATERAL NEGOTIATION BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND THE PHILIPPINES--TO CLEAR ALL DOUBTS AND SPECULATIONS ON THIS ISSUE.

11. "...THERE IS NOTHING BUT HIGH PRAISE FOR PRESIDENT MARCOS' DETERMINED DESIRE TO BRING ABOUT SECURITY AND HARMONY WITHIN THE ASEAN REGION.

12. "HIS TIMING IS ALSO VERY APPROPRIATE--AS THE WORLD CAN WATCH AND SEE THE ASEAN SPIRIT AT WORK.

13. "WITH THIS SPIRIT, ASEAN CAN CHART NEW COURSES AND FIND ACCEPTANCES FROM THE REGION AND THE WORLD."

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ACTION EA-09

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P R 080207Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO USINFO WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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AMCONSUL HONG KMHG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
ANSMBASSY SINGAPORE 7197
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
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SECSTATE WASHDC 8420

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

14. MALAY-LANGUAGE UTUSAN MALAYSIA SAYS THAT PRESIDENT MARCOS PROVED HIMSELF A REAL STATESMAN WHO CARES FOR A MAJORITY OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIANS RATHER THAN A MINORITY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT "IS TAKING DEFINITE STEPS TO ELIMINATE ONE OF THE BURDENS OF ASEAN--THE CLAIM OF THE PHILIPPINE REPUBLIC OF SABAH."

15. "IN THE MIDST OF UNCERTAINTIES AND SPECULATIONS, PRESIDENT MARCOS HAD MADE THE UNEXPECTED ANNOKDCDSSENT MUCH TO THE DELIGHT OF THE MALAYSIAN PEOPLE AND EVEN THE PEOPLE OF ASEAN AS A WHOLE.

16. "THE ANNOUNCEMENT, APART FROM BEING TO ASEAN SOLIDARITY, ALSO IMPROVED PRESIDENT MARCOS' OWN IMAGE AND DISPELLED
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ALL OTHER DOUBTS ON HIM."

17. MALAY-LANGUAGE UTUSAN MELAYU SAYS THAT IT MUST HAVE NOT BEEN EASY FOR PRESIDENT MARCOS TO HAVE MADE THE STATE-
MENT ON THE SABAH CLAIM ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE SECOND ASEAN SUMMIT.

18. " BUT PRESIDENT MARCOS HAD BEEN KNOWN TO BE A BRAVE POLITICIAN--BRAVE IN MAKING HIS DECISIONS AND HIS STEPS BUT IN THIS RESPECT PRESIDENT MARCOS POLITICAL BRAVERY WAS NOT WITHOUT SUBSTANCE. HE HAD MADE HIS DECISION ON THE SABAH CLAIM AFTER THE CONVICTION THAT IT IS A 'MINOR ISSUE' COMPARED WITH THE WIDE OBJECTIVES OF ASEAN FOLLOWING THE POLITICAL CHANGES IN ASIA AFTER THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER OF INDOCHINA.

19. "IN ACTUAL FACT THE CLAIM ON SABAH IS NOT A POPULAR POLITICAL ISSUE EVEN IN THE PHILIPPINES AS IT IS NOT A MATTER OF 'DEAD OR ALIVE' ISSUE.

20. "THE ISSUE WAS MADE POPULAR BY CERTAIN POLITICANS DURING THE TIME OF PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL IN 1963 WHICH WAS IN LINE OR RATHER COINCIDED WITH THE INDONESIAN CONFRONTATION WITH MALAYSIA."

21. OUTLINING THE PROBLEMS FACING THE ASEAN SUMMIT, NEW STRAIGHTS TIMES SAYS:

22. "...THE PROBLEMS FACED ARE A MEASURE OF THE CONFLICT OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PRIORITIES INHERENT IN ANY MULTI-NATION GROUPING, ESPECIALLY IN A GROUP MADE UP OF FOUR MUTUALLY COMPETITIVE ECONOMIES AND ONE ODD MAN OUT. SIMILAR RESTRAINTS MAKE IT UNLIKELY THAT ASEAN STATES WILL AGREE TO EXTEND THE LIST OF ITEMS FOR PREFERENTIAL TRADING.
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23. "BUT ANY PESSIMISM WOULD BE PREMATURE AND UNWARRANTED. EVEN IN THE CASE OF PREFERENTIAL TRADE, THE DOOR HAS NOT BEEN CLOSED ON FUTURE NEGOTIATION; AND ASEAN HAS MADE IMPORTANT PROGRESS IN AREAS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION WHICH LEND THEMSELVES MORE READILY TO COLLECTIVE APPROACHES. GIVEN THE COMPLEXITIES AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL, WHAT REALLY MATTERS IS THAT PROGRESS SHOULD BE STEADY. IF IT IS SLOW IT IS BECAUSE IT CANNOT BE OTHERWISE. FOR CONSENSUS MUST PRECEDE THE ACTIONS THAT GIVE SUBSTANCE TO REGIONAL COOPERATION. THUS IT IS THAT THE PRESENT SUMMIT WILL HOPEFULLY BE THE CURTAIN RAISER TO THE INCREASED ECONOMIC COOPERATION THAT ALL ASEAN MEMBERS ADVOCATE." ITEM.
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